

The Athenian Mercury.

Monday, May 24. 1697.

Quest. 1. **W**herefore do our Bodys grow more, and more hastily in our Infancy, and in the first Years after our Infancy, than they do in our Youth?

Ans^r. Because that Nature being remote from its perfection, it doth make the more haste to attain it, and sets all the forces of the Natural Heat, (which is then more fervent and boyling) to Convert most of the Alliment towards the growth and increase of the Body.

Quest. 2. Wherefore is it that having 2 Eyes, we see nevertheless but one only kind, or Image of the Object?

Ans^r. Even so for having two Ears, no more than one and the same sound is heard; the Original of their Motion being the same, for these two Organs make but one sense; but yet provident Nature hath been pleased that one and the same sense should have two Instruments, to the End, that if one should be taken from us, the other might supply the defect thereof.

Quest. 3. Why do not Men stir, and move their Ears as most other Animals do?

Ans^r. Because that other Animals have a great Flexibility and Volubility, (if we may so word it) in the Muscles of their Ears, by which they do, in part express their desires; But in Men such things would be unserviceable, and indecent, who are able to express their Conceptions, not only with their Tongues, but also in other Signs, nay, even with their Faces when they are uncovered. And yet 'tis said, that the Family of the Flaccy in Rome and we our selves in Gascony, have seen two Men, who have had that movement in their Ears.

Quest. 4. Can we hear under Water?

Ans^r. Yes, very well, as those that are accustomed to dive do relate and affirm. And Fishes themselves will slip away if a great Noise be made on, or near the Water. Pliny relates, that there were Fishes (in the Ponds of the Emperour of Rome) that wou'd come forth of the Water, being Called by an accustomed Name.

Quest. 5. How can we perceive the Number of the Heavens?

Ans^r. By two Principle means, the one is by the Eclipses, Defaults, or observing of the Stars; for since that certain Stars do Eclipse, and at certain times hide from us other Stars; 'Tis a certain Argument, that they are found in our View; And those that do Eclipse others, are in some lower Orb. For if they were not so, they could not hide the others from our sight. The other Proof is drawn

from the Diversity and Difference of the Motions of the Heavens: For every Natural Body having a proper and peculiar Motion; and Nevertheless, Divers Motions are observed in the Heavens, and a greater Number in the Inferior Orbs, than in the Superior. 'Tis therefore without question, that the Inferiors do receive this Diversity of Motions (besides their Natural) from the superior Orbs; And therefore there is a necessity that there be as many Heavens, as there are Diversity of Motions.

Quest. 6. How can we come to know, that the Heavens are Round?

Ans^r. We may know this from many reasons: The first is, that the Heavens Incircling, and Containing all the other Bodys of the Universe ought to have the Figure the most Capable, which is the Round, Spherick, or Circular. The Second is, that the Heavens being the most moveable Bodys of the World, as we may perceive (by their Continual Motions) this Figure must also be attributed to them, as the most proper for Motion. The Third is, that if the Heavens were of any other Figure than Round, they would Interfere and Batter, or pierce and penetrate, in Turning, and Rowling one into the other: Or else there would remain a Vacuum, or Emptiness, in the Angles, or Extremities of their Bodies; Which are absurdities against Nature; The Fourth is, that if they were of any other Figure than Round, then in the same Day, the Sun, the Moon, and the other Stars, (the which being carried about, by the Rapidity of the first moveable, do in twenty four hours surround the Universe) would appear at certain hours greater, when their Approaches are nearer the Earth, which things never come to pass; so that it must be concluded that the Heavens are round.

Quest. 7. Why do Physitians forbid us to sleep on our Back?

Ans^r. Because that Lying in this Manner, the Reins are Heated, and Flegm Thickned, which Ingenders the Stone: It heats also the Blood in the Great Vein called Cava, and the Spirits that are in the great Artery, and doth also bind and stop up the Passages of the Excrements, from which (as Avicenna saith) do proceed the Apoplexies, Phrenies, and the disease called the Night Mare.

Quest. 8. Wherefore do men sneeze more strongly, and oftener than any other Creatures?

Ans^r. 'Tis because they eat commonly more than they ought, and of more sorts of meats, being not so well and readily able to digest them as other creatures, great quantity of Vapours do ascend the brain, which doth endeavour to discharge

charge them by the means of sneezing, which proceeds, as the Philosopher saith, from the Lancing of the Spirits, when the moisture doth endeavour to get out; Or else by the Expulsion of some raw and indigested Humour. Moreover he saith, that Man having the Passages of the Nostrils more ample and open then any other Creature, in proportion to his Body, wherein are contained more Wind and Spirits that do provoke sneezing. To this may be added, that Man having more Brain in proportion to his Body than others, so hath he also more moisture, Inasmuch, that when he taketh Cold, Great quantity of Humours fill those Passages, which being thrust out by the Spirits, there must needs be a pains taking in this Conflict and Noise also.

Quest. 9. *Doth sound proceed from the Knocking of two Bodys one against another, or from the Air which is broken between both?*

Ans. The Knocking of two hard Bodys one against another, is indeed the efficient cause of Sound, but not the formal; for the formal cause is the Collision, or beating of the Air between two hard Bodies: It would seem at first dash (and there is much appearance for it too) that sound is in such Bodys knocking against each other, and sounding: Even as the Colour in the Body Coloured, and the smell, in the Body smelling; And the Savour in the Body Savouring; And not in the Air: Nevertheless, it is not so in the sense of hearing, as in those other Sences: Forasmuch, as the other sences have their Objects stayed, and permanent; but sound is only in that moment, that two Bodys beat the one against the other: For sound is made, not in the Beating of those two Bodys alone, but by the Collision and Breaking of the Air between them. As for Example, sound is not in the Bell that sounds, but in the Air beaten and broken between the Clapper and the Bell.

Quest. 10. *Wherefore is it that two Lutes, or other like Instruments, being Mounted and Accorded in the same Tone: If you sound and play on the one, near to the other, even that which we do not touch will sound also?*

Ans. 'Tis because of the Simpathy and Constancy of the Instruments. The Strings of one of which being pinched, the Air which is affected with the Harmony, doth affect and cause to sound the Strings of the other. And for this same cause, if you pinch a String of the Lute, the other Strings that are accorded either in the Unison or Octave, will sound also; which may be proved by the putting of a little Straw, or peice of Paper upon that String which we touch not. And that we may yet a little better Philosophize upon this Subject, we may add, that we must observe a double Motion of the Strings of an Instrument: The one is, that which beateth the string before, when the string is pinched; The other is, that which beateth the Air be-

hind, when it retires after that it is pinched; for the Warings of the Air, moved by the string pinched, meeting another string wound up to the Unison, or Octave, they do shake it and make it sound; But meeting of other strings wound up to another Tone, and out of the Unison, or Octave, they do not find a like Disposition of Motion, because of the dissonancy and disproportion of the Tone; so that they will not move, or sound at all.

Quest. 11. *Whether do Stones grow in the Entrails of the Earth?*

Ans. To take the word **Grow**, properly for a Motion in quantity (as the Philosophers speak) viz. By the Nouriture received into all the parts of a living Body; by the means of the Organs and Passages of it, by which the Soul may Exercise its Functions, Stones cannot be said to grow: But if you take the word **Grow** for to Augment; There is no doubt, but they and all sorts of Minerals do grow, but 'tis by the Accession of a proximate well disposed matter. But for Stone, taken for the Stone, or Gravel, you may Read of it in our next *Mercury*.

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